

WHEN Messrs. Bulganin and Khrushchev visit their own bodyguards, the leader of this band will probably be General Ivan Serov, the chairman of the State Security Committee and a member of the Soviet Cabinet. My picture shows him standing at Marshal Bulganin's right hand.

General Serov is a much-decorated officer, but he has won his medals by the successful direction of operations



SEROV AT WORK

that might be described as "not quite orthodox."

In April, 1940, he was awarded the Order of Lenin for organising deportations from Soviet-occupied Poland. In March, 1944, he was given the Order of Suvorov, first class, for supervising the deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other minority groups living in the Crimea or the North Caucasus.

Red Banner

In 1945 General Serov won a second Order of Lenin for organising the return of Russian P.O.W.s and providing the prison labour required to run the East German uranium mines. In 1953 he won a third Order of Lenin for his work in marshalling the four labour battalions for the construction of the Volga-Don canal.

On the eve of Christmas, 1954, he was awarded the Red Banner of Labour—and his old colleague Abakumov was shot.

It is customary to give an honour of some kind to the person responsible for the safety of visiting potentates, but there would seem to me to be grounds for making an exception in the case of the Abominable Serov.

I.T.N.

NO announcement has yet been made as to the choice of a successor to Mr. Alan Crawley as Editor-in-Chief of Independent Television News. But it will not surprise me if the post goes to Mr. Geoffrey Cox.

Mr. Cox is a New Zealander who, after distinguishing himself in the war (his Cretan despatches are still remembered), had a long spell of more restful service as lobby correspondent and has for the past year been

a deputy editor of the "News Chronicle."

Fifty Years On

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL'S unexpected appearance in the House of Commons last Monday was received with general acclaim: but I fancy that few of those present can have realised the full significance of his visit.

It was just fifty years previously, on February 13, 1906, that Mr. Churchill first took his seat on the Treasury Bench, under Secretary for the Colonies.

Confirmed Woodman

SIR WILLIAM LYONS, who has just received the accolade from the Queen Mother, is a motor manufacturer who has always taken an intense pleasure in driving his own cars. But whereas, in the thirties, he went home to lunch faster than most along the Kenilworth road out of Coventry, he now counts himself lucky if he can afford a 20-minute break at midday in the works canteen.

The Jaguar woodworking shop is a source of delight for those who like to see wood finely used for instrument-board and trimmings. Every year, however, possible substitutes are examined with great care, and sample cars produced and submitted to Sir William.

When the sponsors ask him which is wood and which is not, the alternatives are often so nearly indistinguishable that he hesitates to commit himself. "It's your job to know the answer to that," he says. "But we'll use wood."

Front-Bench Boomerang

MR. ALAN LENNOX-BOYD was once a favourite target for Bevanite barbs. "A typical product of the Junior Imperial League" was Mr. Michael Foot's choice description of the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. Bevan has now been chosen to lead the Labour Party in Colonial debates, but his associates have notably failed of late to penetrate the Minister's armour. Nor is Mr. Bevan likely, in the next few months, to rival Mr. Lennox-Boyd's exceptional grasp of detail. On the other hand he would be ill-advised to launch into a discourse on such wide topics as the theory of trusteeship for backward peoples. It is exactly thirty years since Mr. Lennox-Boyd won the Best Prize with a notable essay on that topic.

The Duke Under Sail

THIS month's annual meeting of the Royal Yachting Association will be marked

both by the retirement of Sir Ralph Gore, after ten very successful years in the chair, and by the election of the Duke of Edinburgh as his successor.

Meanwhile competition among owners of Pin-class racing dinghies has been stimulated by the gift of a solid gold cup, to be awarded annually to the winner of the International championship in that class. This was presented by Mr. R. G. Mitchell, who has an unequalled record as a defender of British yachting, and it will be competed for, in the first place, at Burnham-on-Crouch this Easter.

The Finn was used at Helsinki in 1952 and will be used again at Melbourne in next winter's Olympics. Entries for Mr. Mitchell's cup have already come in from seven countries; the competitors include a formidable Dane—Paul Eivstrom, who won gold medals in the 1948 and 1952 Olympics.

The Mixture as Before

THE second National Book Sale will run from next Wednesday, February 22, till Saturday, March 3. Over 700 bookshops are to take part, and the sale will be inaugurated by Mr. R. A. Butler at a reception at the headquarters of the National Book League.

Unlike Lord Attlee, who has firmly named Dante and Virgil as the foundation of his literary tastes, Mr. Butler has never, to my knowledge, revealed the secrets of his library. Visitors to Halstead and to Smith Square report, however, that he has an imposing collection of historical literature in both English and French and is especially familiar with the novels of Disraeli.

History is not, I believe, one of the subjects best exploited in the National Book Sale; but the connoisseur of memoirs, reprints, travel books and unrewarded novelists can count on finding, among the million books to be offered at bargain prices, a good deal that will be to his taste.

Persian Buttonhole

"THE Iris" (I quote from an Edwardian authority) "is *par excellence* the genus for the intellectual specialist."

No botanist myself, I cannot vouch for this. But the Iris or, to be exact, the *Iris persica*, is about to draw Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, the most intellectual of flower-men, to Persia, and possibly to Afghanistan.

This flower had the distinction of being reproduced as Plate I in the first issue of the "Botanical Magazine" in 1787; but it is now unknown west of

Sues. Mr. Blunt hopes to bring it back intact and under the aegis of the Royal Horticultural Society, to reintroduce it to this country.

Iris-fanciers may like to note that it belongs to the same Juno group, stands only a very few inches from the ground, is sea-green and violet in colour, and is notable for its "toothed or crenate" edges.

Room 101

"YOU asked me once... what was in Room 101.... The thing that is in Room 101 is the worst-thing in the world," In George Orwell's "1984,"

Room 101 at the Ministry of Love is the place of final degradation. In that room all men were forced to welcome defeat and self-annihilation when exposed to the apparatus of terror wielded by an omnipotent police state.

It is, presumably, sheer coincidence that Burgess and Maclean were exhibited by their Communist masters in Room 101 of the Hotel National in Moscow.

A Forster Jubilee

MR. E. M. FORSTER is the most sparing of writers, and it is therefore all the more

galling to his loyal readers that the publication of his new book, a family memoir, may be delayed by the go-slow dispute.

Meanwhile I have been re-perusing a Forster rarity—the Temple edition of the "Aeneid," to which the author of "A Passage to India" contributed a preface and notes just fifty years ago. The notes are laconic, but once or twice in the preface we hear the authentic note of the most unassuming of our stylists. "The things he really understands," he says of Virgil, "are not heroic—the dancing reflection of water on a ceiling, the whiz

of tops in a courtyard, the departure of colours at night-fall, sea that trembled under the moon, the poor woman who must rise early, the sufferings of animals and flowers..."

The whole essay would bear reprinting, so remote is it from textbook English and textbook judgments.

Syncopated Shaw

AMERICA'S contribution to this year's Gordon Bernard Shaw centenary will be a lavish musical-comedy version of "Pygmalion." It is called "My Fair Lady" and will reach New York on March 15.

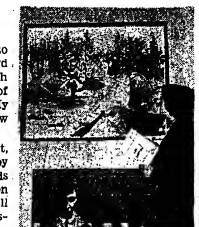
Apart from the G.B.S. plot, which has been "adapted" by Alan Jay Lerner, these islands are represented by Rex Harrison and Stanley Holloway. Cecil Beaton has designed the costumes and the part of Eliza Doolittle is played by Julie Andrews of Walton-on-Thames and "The Boy Friend." She has been taught cockney by an American professor of phonetics.

Academic Esels

IN organising its first exhibition of student art, the University of London Union broke new and unpredictable ground. It was natural, of course, that many entries should come from the art schools (the Slade, most notably, and the Chelsea Polytechnic), which form part of the university. But from the remaining 20,000 undergraduates, for aches anything, or nothing, might have been expected.

Fortified, however, by the prospect of the prizes, totalling £100, which had been presented by THE SUNDAY TIMES, the exhibitors turned up in

strength. Two of the six prizes were carried off by freebooters from, respectively, Birbeck College and the Royal Free Hospital; and the first prize for oils was given to Mr. J. D. Ferguson of the Slade School. As for the winter landscape which appears in the upper part of this photograph, the figure on the right is the Vice-President of the Union, Miss Dibley, and the fixed gaze and gleaming collar in the bottom left corner



WINTER ON THE LINE

are those of Mr. P. McDowell of the Chelsea Polytechnic who, though well regarded by the judges, just failed to win a prize.

Bumping Feet

AT the moment Cambridge can boast of the heaviest crew—they tip the scales at an average weight of 13 st. 4 lb.—and the tallest cox in the 126 years of the Boat Race.

Dr. J. Owen, the Cambridge coach, tells me that he has arranged to give "a little more room under the stretcher" for aches anything, or nothing, might have been expected.

I note that Denny, who stands a lean six feet in his rowing socks, is nearly twice as tall as H. F. V. Massey, the shortest cox who ever succored a Varsity crew.